

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-14 are presently pending in the present application. No new matter is introduced by this amendment.

The Applicants interpret the lack of any prior art rejection of claims 1-14 as an indication that, upon clarification of the priority information, they would be allowed, and that the claims patentably distinguish over any art considered upon issuance of the Office Action.

In the Office Action, the specification has been objected to for an informality; the priority claim has been indicated as being improper; and the declaration has been rejected as containing incorrect information.

The Office Action indicates that the present application was processed as a filing under 35 U.S.C. §111(a), and that no transmittal letter under 35 U.S.C. §371 was submitted at the time the present application was filed. In order to prevent a loss of rights to the invention set forth in the present application and to address the various objections/rejections set forth in the outstanding Office Action, the Applicants are submitting, under separate cover, a Petition to Revive U.S. Ser. No. 10/023,332. The Preliminary Amendment dated September 22, 2003, filed in the present application indicates that the present application claims priority to U.S. Ser. No. 10/023,332. Accordingly, upon revival of U.S. Ser. No. 10/023,332, the Applicants submit that the present application can claim priority to U.S. Ser. No. 10/023,332, as a continuation thereof.

Regarding the objection to the specification of the present application and in accordance with the above noted course of action regarding the priority claim, the specification has been

amended herein to delete the reference to International Application PCT/US02/08345, and to indicate that the present application is a continuation of and claims priority to U.S. Patent Application 10/023,332, and further claims priority to U.S. Provisional Patent Application Serial No. 60/276,923, U.S. Provisional Patent Application Serial No. 60/276,953, U.S. Provisional Patent Application Serial No. 60/276,954, and U.S. Provisional Patent Application Serial No. 60/276,955. Accordingly, the Applicants submit that the first paragraph of the present application is proper, and therefore the Applicants request the withdrawal of the objection to the specification.

Regarding the indication in the Office Action that the priority claim is improper, the Applicants submit that upon revival of U.S. Ser. No. 10/023,332, the claim of priority thereto as a continuation thereof is proper. Accordingly, the Applicants request the withdrawal of the indication that the claim of priority is improper and request that the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office record be corrected to reflect the acknowledgement of the proper claim of priority.

Regarding the rejection of the declaration as containing incorrect information, the Applicants are submitting, under separate cover, a Supplemental Declaration that indicates that the present application is a continuation of and claims priority to U.S. Patent Application 10/023,332, and further claims priority to U.S. Provisional Patent Application Serial No. 60/276,923, U.S. Provisional Patent Application Serial No. 60/276,953, U.S. Provisional Patent Application Serial No. 60/276,954, and U.S. Provisional Patent Application Serial No. 60/276,955. Accordingly, the Applicants submit that the priority claimed in the Supplemental Declaration is proper, and therefore the Applicants request the withdrawal of the objection to the declaration.

In addition to the above, the Applicants are submitting a Supplemental Application Data Sheet that sets forth the above priority information.

Therefore, the present application is in condition for allowance. Favorable consideration is respectfully requested. If any unresolved issues remain, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner telephone the undersigned attorney at (703) 519-9952 so that such issues may be resolved as expeditiously as possible.

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 CFR §1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 504213 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Date

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